

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as set forth below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. **(Currently Amended)** A remote station for tracking valuation of at least one of a group of products and a group of services, comprising:

wherein each one of each group bears a code that uniquely identifies each one in the group and each one in the group is substantially identical in type, and the remote station is communicatively coupled to at least one user station,

a database resident at the remote station,

wherein the database stores ones of the uniquely identifying codes that have been previously received from one or more user stations;

a database server, communicatively coupled to the database, that compares each new candidate code received from a given user station against the previously received codes stored in the database; wherein the database server credits an account of a user associated with the given user station with a non-zero valuation credit upon such new candidate code being received from the given user station and was not previously stored in the database; and

wherein the database server stores such new candidate code in the database as a previously received code if such new candidate code was not previously stored in the database; and

the database server configured to issue a credit certificate to the account of the user upon a pre-set value of non-zero valuation credits being accumulated in the user account, wherein the credit certificate is usable as a coupon, rebate, or refund by the user and the user is notified of the pre-set value being accumulated.

2. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein said database further includes at least one permissible new candidate code, and wherein the at least one permissible new candidate code is provided by a provider of the ones in the group, and wherein said database server compares each new candidate code against the at least one permissible new candidate code.

3. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 2, wherein the non-zero valuation credit is not credited if the new candidate code does not match one of the at least one permissible new candidate codes.

4. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 3, wherein there are at least two groups, and wherein each group is provided by a different provider.

5. (Original) The remote station of claim 4, wherein said database server maintains separate previously received codes and separate permissible new candidate codes for each provider.

6. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein said database is resident on a network server at the remote station.

7. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 6, wherein the communicative coupling comprises an internet connection.

8. (Original) The remote station of claim 1, wherein said database server includes one account

associated with each user to correspond to one group for the crediting of the non-zero valuation credit.

9. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein there are at least two groups, and wherein each group is provided by a different provider.

10. (Original) The remote station of claim 9, wherein said database server maintains separate previously received codes for each provider.

11. (Original) The remote station of claim 1, wherein said database server, upon storing a previously received code, further stores the previously received code as a consumed code.

12. (Original) The remote station of claim 11, wherein the consumed code cannot be entered as a previously received code by a subsequent user.

13. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the uniquely identifying code comprises a UPC.

14. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the uniquely identifying code comprises a SPIF.

15. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the uniquely identifying code is numeric.

16. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the uniquely identifying code is alphabetic.

17. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the uniquely identifying code is alpha-numeric.

18. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the new candidate code is placed under a peel off label.

19. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the new candidate code is read by a code reader at the user station.

20. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 19, wherein said code reader comprises a bar code reader.

21. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein the new candidate code is typed into the user station by the user.

22. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 21, wherein the new candidate code is typed into an internet browser interface at the user station by the user.

23. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 1, wherein a web browser is resident on the remote station and the user station.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (**Currently Amended**) A remote station for tracking a group of promotional certificates, comprising:

wherein each of the group of promotional certificates bears a code that uniquely identifies each certificate in the group and the group comprises promotional certificates comprising an identical group issued by a particular provider,

wherein the remote station is communicatively coupled to at least one user station and comprises: a database resident at the remote station,

wherein the database stores ones of the uniquely identifying codes that have been previously received from one or more user stations;

a database server, communicatively coupled to the database, that compares each new candidate code received from a given user station against the previously received codes stored in the database; wherein the database server credits an account of a user associated with the given user station with a non-zero certificate credit upon such new candidate code being received from the given user station and was not previously stored in the database; and

wherein the database server stores such new candidate code in the database as a previously received code if such new candidate code was not previously stored in the database; and

the database server configured to issue a credit certificate to the account of the user upon a pre-set value of non-zero certificate credits being accumulated in the user account, wherein the credit certificate is usable as a coupon, rebate, or refund by the user and the user is notified of the pre-set value being accumulated.

26. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein the user is a retailer.

27. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 26, wherein the account credited comprises a retailer's account, and wherein the non-zero credit is equivalent to a purchase value for the certificate.

28. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein said database further includes at least one permissible new candidate code, and wherein the at least one permissible new candidate code is provided by a provider of the certificates in the group, and wherein said database server compares each new candidate code against the at least one permissible new candidate code.

29. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 28, wherein the non-zero gift certificate credit is not credited if the new candidate code does not match one of the at least one permissible new candidate codes.

30. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 29, wherein there are at least two groups of certificates, and wherein each group is provided by a different provider.

31. (Original) The remote station of claim 30, wherein said database server maintains separate previously received codes and separate permissible new candidate codes for each provider.

32. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein said database is resident on a network server at the remote station.

33. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 32, wherein the communicative coupling comprises an internet connection.

34. (Original) The remote station of claim 25, wherein said database server, upon storing a previously received code, further stores the previously received code as a consumed code.

35. (Original) The remote station of claim 34, wherein the consumed code cannot be entered as a previously received code by a subsequent user.

36. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein the gift certificate code is numeric.

37. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein the gift certificate code is alphabetic.

38. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein the gift certificate code is alpha-numeric.

39. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein the new candidate code is read by a code reader at the user station.

40. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 39, wherein said code reader comprises a bar code reader.

41. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein the new candidate code is typed into the user station by the user.

42. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 41, wherein the new candidate code is typed into an internet browser interface at the user station by the user.

43. (Previously Presented) The remote station of claim 25, wherein a web browser is resident on the remote station and the user station.

44. (Previously Presented) A method for tracking promotion of at least one group of products, comprising:

wherein each product of the group bears a code that uniquely identifies each product in the group and each product of the group is substantially identical in type,

communicatively coupling a remote station to a user station;
providing a database at the remote station;
storing in the database ones of the uniquely identifying codes that have been previously received from one or more user stations;
comparing, using at least one computer processor, each new candidate code received from a given user station against the previously received codes stored in the database;
crediting, using at least one computer processor, an account of a user associated with the given user station with a non-zero promotional credit upon such new candidate code being received from the given user station and was not previously stored in the database;
storing such new candidate code in the database as a previously received code if such new candidate code was not previously stored in the database; and
issuing, by at least on computer processor, a credit certificate to the account of the user upon a pre-set value of non-zero valuation credits being accumulated in the user account, wherein the credit certificate is usable as a coupon, rebate, or refund by the user and the user is notified of the pre-set value being accumulated.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, further comprising receiving at the remote station from the user station the new candidate code prior to said comparing.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, further comprising storing the previously received code as a consumed code.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 46, further comprising preventing entry of the consumed code as a previously received code by a subsequent user.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, further comprising: storing at least one permissible new candidate code provided by a provider of the products in the group; and comparing each new candidate code against the at least one permissible new candidate code.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 48, further comprising preventing said crediting of the non-zero promotional credit if the new candidate code does not match one of the at least one permissible new candidate codes.

50. (Previously Presented) A method for tracking a group of gift certificates, comprising:
 wherein each of the group of gift certificates bears a code that uniquely identifies each gift certificate in the group and the group comprises an identical group of gift certificates issued by a particular provider,

 communicatively coupling a remote station to a user station;

 providing a database at the remote station;

 storing in the database ones of the gift certificate codes that have been previously received from one or more user stations;

 comparing, using at least one computer processor, each new candidate code received from a given user station against the previously received codes stored in the database;

crediting, using at least one computer processor, an account of a user associated with the given user station with a non-zero gift certificate credit upon such new candidate code being received from the given user station and was not previously stored in the database, wherein the user is a retailer and the non-zero certificate credit is equivalent to a purchase value for the gift certificate; and

storing such new candidate code in the database as a previously received code if such new candidate code was not previously stored in the database.

51. (Cancelled)

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, further comprising exchanging, by the retailer, of at least one product of value equivalent to the gift certificate for the gift certificate, prior to said comparing.

53. (Cancelled)

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, further comprising receiving at the remote station from the user station the new candidate code prior to said comparing.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, further comprising storing the previously received code as a consumed code.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 55, further comprising preventing entry of the consumed code as a previously received code by a subsequent user.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, further comprising: storing at least one permissible new candidate code provided by a provider of the gift certificates in the group; and comparing each new candidate code against the at least one permissible new candidate code.

58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 57, further comprising preventing said crediting of the non-zero gift certificate credit if the new candidate code does not match one of the at least one permissible new candidate codes.

59. **(Currently Amended)** A promotional system, comprising:

- a user station;

- at least one product group, wherein each product in the group bears a unique code and each product in the group is substantially similar in type; and

- a remote station communicatively coupled to said user station, said remote station comprising:

 - a database resident at the remote station, wherein the database stores ones of the uniquely identifying codes that have been previously received from one or more user stations;

 - a database server, communicatively coupled to the database, that compares each new candidate code received from a given user station against the previously received codes stored in the database;

wherein the database server credits an account of a user associated with the given user station with a non-zero promotional credit upon such new candidate code being received from the given user station and was not previously stored in the database; and

wherein the database server stores such new candidate code in the database as a previously received code if such new candidate code was not previously stored in the database, and

the database server configured to issue a credit certificate to the account of the user upon a pre-set value of non-zero valuation credits being accumulated in the user account, wherein the credit certificate is usable as a coupon, rebate, or refund by the user and the user is notified of the pre-set value being accumulated.

60. **(Currently Amended)** A gift certificate system, comprising:

at least one user station;

a group of gift certificates, each of which bears a unique code and the group comprises an identical group of gift certificates issued by a particular provider; and

a remote station communicatively coupled to said least one user station, said remote station comprising:

a database resident at the remote station, wherein the database stores ones of the uniquely identifying codes that have been previously received from one or more user stations;

a database server, communicatively coupled to the database, that compares each new candidate code received from a given user station against the previously received codes stored in the database;

wherein the database server credits an account of a user associated with the given user station with a non-zero gift certificate credit when such new candidate code received from the given user station was not previously stored in the database; and

wherein the database server stores such new candidate code in the database as a previously received code if such new candidate code was not previously stored in the database.

61. (Previously Presented) A transaction processing and tracking system comprising:

at least one front-end service providing at least one product bearing a code that uniquely identifies said product;

at least one back-end service communicatively coupled to said at least one front-end service; and,

at least one account, associated with a user of the front-end service, including at least one pre-defined purse suitable for use in the transaction,

wherein said at least one account is communicatively coupled to said at least one front-end service;

wherein said at least one product is transacted in exchange for multiple resource types included in said account by interacting with said account in accordance with an agreed value of said at least one product; and

wherein said at least one product is exchanged for multiple ones of the multiple resource types, and accordingly said account is interacted with, and wherein further the user can transfer value from the at least one account associated with the user to at least one account belonging to a second user of the front end service.

62. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 61, wherein said communicatively coupled comprises a known communications network.

63. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 62, wherein said known communications network comprises at least one of an Internet, intranet, LAN, WAN, and a wireless communication.

64. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 61, wherein said at least one front-end service includes at least one of merchants, financial resources, service providers, and business partners.

65. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 61, wherein said at least one back-end service includes at least one of a server and software resource and consumer account.

66. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 61, wherein transactions include value based transactions.

67. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 61, wherein said interacting includes debits.

68. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 61, wherein said interacting includes credits.

69. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 61, wherein said interacting includes value chaining.

70. (Previously Presented) A method for tracking promotion of at least one group of products, comprising:

communicatively coupling, by a computer network, a remote station to a user station;

providing a database communicatively coupled to the remote station;

receiving, from a provider of the products in the at least one group, at least one permissible candidate code;

maintaining at least one account associated with a user;

receiving, from the user station, at least one new product code, wherein the at least one new product code is a unique code that identifies each product in the at least one group and wherein further each product of the group is substantially identical in type and the at least one new product code is input into the user station by the user;

storing the at least one new product code in the database;

comparing, using at least one computer processor, the at least one new product code received from the user station against one or more product codes that were previously stored in the database;

comparing, using at least one computer processor, the at least one new product code against the at least one permissible candidate code;

crediting, using at least one computer processor, the at least one account with a non-zero promotional credit upon the at least one new product code differing from the one or more product codes stored in the database and the at least one permissible candidate code;

marking the at least one new product code as a consumed code, wherein the consumed code is not usable by a subsequent user;

storing the at least one new product code in the database; and

issuing, by at least on computer processor, a credit certificate to the account upon a pre-set value of non-zero valuation credits being accumulated in the account, wherein the credit certificate is usable as a coupon, rebate, or refund by the user and the user is notified of the pre-set value being accumulated.